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How to Make Homemade Bubble Solution

Have some good clean fun with your preschooler and bubbles

By Amanda Rock | Updated on September 26, 2019

Blowing and chasing bubbles with your kids will get you outdoors and enjoying healthy exercise. It's a fun activity for all ages.

You don't have to spend money on store-bought bubbles. Making a bubble solution at home will not only save money, but it also introduces kids to how to use the kitchen, measure ingredients, and perform a little easy math.

Making homemade bubbles also teaches lessons about reusing and repurposing materials, sparking your child's imagination.

The Science of Making Bubbles

There is science to the process of making good bubble solution. Water by itself has a high surface tension and plain water bubbles are small and quick to burst. Adding soap or detergent to the solution lowers the surface tension and allows larger bubbles to form.

Glycerin and corn syrup help the bubbles last longer by slowing down evaporation that causes them to burst.

Before You Start

When making homemade bubbles, it is best to do it in large batches. Use either a clean bucket or a washed-out gallon-sized milk container. Then store the leftover bubbles in the milk container or a large plastic pitcher.

To use the bubble solution, pour it into an empty store-bought bubble container or a cleaned out, cylindrical-shaped frozen juice containers.

Basic Homemade Bubble Solution

This simple recipe produces good bubbles. Many people use just water and dishwashing liquid, but the addition of corn syrup, like Karo syrup, or glycerin holds the solution together to make better bubbles.

- 1 cup water
- 2 tablespoons light Karo syrup or 2 tablespoons glycerin
- 4 tablespoons dishwashing liquid

Stir together until everything is dissolved.

Colored Bubbles

Regular bubbles have a nice sheen of their own, but adding a few drops of liquid food coloring to the mixture really makes a big difference.

Make sure you make this outside, away from anything that you don't want stained (cars, patios, decks, etc.). The food coloring usually washes away, but you don't want to take any chances.

- 1 cup granulated soap or soap powder
- 1-quart warm water
- Liquid food coloring

Dissolve soap in warm water. Mix in the food coloring until you get the shade you want.

Use this as an opportunity to discuss how colors combine with your child. For example, yellow and blue make green, and blue and red make purple.

Sugar Bubbles

Adding sugar also seems to produce bubbles that are bigger and slower to pop. If you are having a bubble-blowing contest, that could be your secret advantage.

- 1 cup water
- 2 tablespoons liquid detergent

- 1 tablespoon glycerin
- 1 teaspoon sugar

Mix all ingredients together until sugar dissolves.

10 Great Ideas for Homemade Bubble Wands

If you happen to have bubble wands from store-bought bubbles lying around the house, you can use those. But experimenting with different household items can also be a lot of fun.

You can find things that you are either getting rid of or serve a different purpose but are a good fit for making bubbles.

Involve your kids in looking for items that have holes that could serve as bubble wands. You'll be exercising their creativity. Here are 10 ideas to get you started:

- Straws
- Fly or bug swatters
- Cookie cutters
- Colanders (for this one, you need a big bowl to dip into the bubble solution, and instead of blowing the bubbles, move your arms back and forth so the force of the wind does the work for you)
- Plastic slotted spoons
- The top end of a salt shaker or spice container
- A ball with holes in it like a Wiffle ball
- Plastic baskets that hold berries (again, you can try blowing, but moving your arms might be less tiring and leave you less winded)
- The top end of a plastic bottle (like a water bottle)
- Make your own using pipe cleaners

Enjoy bubble blowing and encourage your kids to get lots of healthy movement and play.